

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NEA-09

OMB-01 AID-05 IO-10 /080 W
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R 250846Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9687

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MY, RP

SUBJ: MALAYSIAN PRESS COMMENT ON ZAMBOANGA MEETING

REF: MANILA 5136

1. MALAY-LANGUAGE DAILY "BERITA HARIAN" (BH), WHICH NORMALLY FOLLOWS GOM FOREIGN POLICY LINE, EXPRESSED MILD OPTIMISM WITH OUTCOME OF ZAMBOANGA MEETING BETWEEN GOP AND MUSLIM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES APRIL 17-19. IN EDITORIAL APRIL 21, BH SAID: "THERE IS HOPE FOR A SOLUTION TO THE REVOLT OF MUSLIMS IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES WHO LATELY HAVE NOT REPEATED THEIR DEMANDS FOR SEPARATION FROM THE PHILIPPINES. ACCORDING TO A GOVT REPRESENTATIVE WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING WITH MUSLIM REPRESENTATIVES IN ZAMBOANGA CITY, THE MEETING RAN SMOOTHLY AND CONTRIBUTED TO EASING TENSIONS ALTHOUGH AGREEMENT HAS NOT BEEN ACHIEVED. THE MUSLIM CLAIMS WERE NOT REGARDED AS INSURMOUNTABLE BY THE GOP AND THE MAJORITY (OF THE CLAIMS) DEALT WITH IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS, OUSTING CORRUPT OFFICIALS WHO MISUSED THEIR AUTHORITY...AND THE FEELING THEY WERE

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DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE FERTILE LANDS WERE

GIVEN TO THE CHRISTIANS."

2. COMMENTING ON ASEAN'S ROLE, BH CONTINUED:

"COUNTRIES FRIENDLY WITH THE PHILIPPINES WILL BE HAPPY TO SEE AN END TO THE REBELLION BECAUSE SOME ASEAN COUNTRIES (SIC) HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF ASSISTING THE REBELS, WHEREAS ASEAN NATIONS TRULY DO NOT WANT TO INTERFERE IN THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY.... IF A SOLUTION IS FOUND TO THE PROBLEMS OF MUSLIMS IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, IT WILL BE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION IN BRINGING PEACE TO SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS IS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE IN CAMBODIA AND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IS ACHIEVED IN VIETNAM. (SIC)"

3. BEGIN LOU: COMMENT: THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE ZAMBOANGA MEETING AND OTHER GOP INITIATIVES REPORTED REFTEL. NOTWITHSTANDING BH'S CONTORTIONS REGARDING THE ADVENT OF PEACE IN INDOCHINA, THE EDITORIAL PROVIDES SOME INDICATION THAT MALAYSIANS BELIEVE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINE SITUATION MAY NOT BE ALL THAT BLEAK, EVEN FROM THE GOP'S POINT OF VIEW. END LOU.
UNDERHILL

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